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A
SHORT VIEW

OF

THE SINS AND CORRUPTIONS

OF

THE PRESENT TIMES,

FOR WHICH

THE LORD'S PEOPLE ARE LOUDLY CALLED

TO

HUMILIATION, FASTING, AND PRAYER.

ALSO

A LETTER TO A MINISTER

OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND,

BY DAVID DALL, *H*

TEACHER, ORPHAN HOSPITAL.

EDINBURGH:

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1794.

TO THE READER.

SIR,

THE Author, after repeated solicitations, hath been prevailed upon to lay before the Public, the contents of the following pages; perhaps they may give some help to those who are sighing and crying before the Lord for the sins of their Country and People, in these awful and tremendous days wherein iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxing cold, and few, very few, grieved for the affliction of *Joseph*, for the afflicted state of the *Church*, at home and abroad. That this may have such an effect, is the earnest desire and prayer of

SIR,



And most obedient,

And very humble servant,

DAVID DALL.

*Edinburgh, Orphan Hospital }
November 19th 1794. }*

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AS it has been the mercy of these lands, and particularly of this land, to have got very early discoveries of Gospel grace, the covenant of God's grace in Christ Jesus, early made known to them, whereby we were among the first fruits of the Gentiles unto Christ Jesus; so it was the special privilege and honour of this land, and at length of the three lands, in a joint way, solemnly to avouch the Lord to be their God, and to dedicate and devote themselves to his worship and service: Which solemn work, under the influence of Gospel light and grace, as it was remarkably all along owned of God, and followed with many signal tokens of his favour, so the reflection thereon has been matter of joy and comfort unto those who sincerely entered into these bonds themselves,

selves, and also to the lovers of Christ in
 the Churches abroad. But alas ! how is
 the Crown now fallen from our head ?
Wo is unto us, for we have sinned !
 It must be obvious to every serious soul,
 that many sad tokens of the Lord's just
 indignation are already gone forth a-
 gainst us, which will burn more and
 more till we are consumed, if Sovereign
 mercy through Christ prevent not, by
 giving repentance and remission of sin.
 It is also obvious, that it is our indis-
 pensible duty, and the only means of
 relief, as has been the manner and prac-
 tice of the people of God, in former
 times, to set apart seasons for Prayer
 and Fasting in secret, when more pub-
 lic fasts were omitted. And we need
 not scruple to affirm, that there has been
 for many years past, a most culpable
 omission of public and national Fasting,
 although there was scarce ever more need
 of it, or louder calls to it. It is there-
 fore greatly to be wished, and most ear-
 nestly desired, that all who fear the Lord,
 would stir up themselves and one an-
 other to spend as much time in the fore-
 said duty, as possibly they can. And
 it

it is recommended that the last Tuesday of November, or one or other of the days of that week, be set apart for beginning that solemn work, and to be continued, by setting apart the first Tuesday of every month, or one or other of the days of that week for the end foresaid, as the circumstances of persons will best allow : I think that as much time as people can spare, should also be spent in secret for this work, in the morning and evening of every LORD'S DAY and other times, as the intervals of business will permit ; for the work is certainly so great, that it will require, both all the hands, and all the time that can possibly be lent to it. And what follows is humbly offered for assistance, to be further enlarged upon, as the Lord shall enable.

I. We may begin then with the consideration of the gross sins which abound in the land ; such as swearing, cursing, blaspheming the sacred name of God, drunkenness, uncleanness, lying, perjury, theft, robbery, murder, and the like.

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II. We

II. We should proceed to consider these more ordinary sins that abound with us; such as injustice, cheating, fraud, and injuries in dealing betwixt man and man, oppression, grinding of the faces of the poor, *Sabbath-breaking*, by carnal thoughts, speeches, and works; pride, prodigality, riot, covetousness, earthly-mindedness, envy, malice, evil-speaking, backbiting, falsehood, dissimulation, neglect of God's worship in secret, and in families; neglect of instructing children and servants; unbelief, and believing lies and errors; undervaluing the glorious Gospel, and not receiving Christ held forth and offered therein, want of love to God and our neighbour, ignorance, security sloth, &c.

III. To a consideration of these sins which prevail even among those that profess religion: as formality, hypocrisy, and many resting upon the external performance of divine worship, without experience of the power of godliness, the most part of professors being strangers to a saving work of grace on their souls, knowing nothing of regeneration, conversion,

conversion, Faith in Christ, repentance, and Gospel-holiness ; many who having a name that they live, are yet dead, Rev. iii. 1. many are guilty of unworthy communicating, a sin that draws down plagues upon persons and churches, 1 Cor. xi, 26,—30. Many have been under common operations of the spirit, but are now become carnal and unconcerned about religion, retaining only a dry dead form of godliness, and some scarce that same. Some have put on shews of singular piety and devotion to gain applause, and some other base ends who afterwards are discerned to be hypocrites, Matth. xxiii. The most part who profess themselves Christians, are living in the heinous sin of despising Christ in their hearts, and lothing the heavenly manna of the Gospel. And many mispending precious time in useless visits, diversions, plays, comedies, and such like mispending of time ; whereas every moment is exceeding precious and should be well employed.

IV. The sins and backslidings of the LORD's own people; many of them are too far involved in the prevailing sins
of

of the times; some who were once lively in religion, are now sunk in security, unconcernedness, and carnality, and have little or nothing of their wonted zeal for the LORD's interest; and many, even of the LORD's children, are living too easily under the want of communion with God, and are not duly troubled, though he hides his face, and has deserted them in a great measure; and some are so far left that little or no evidences of true grace can be discerned in them, either by themselves or others.

V. As to our Ministers, and Preachers of the Gospel. It is to be lamented, that some of them seem much unacquainted with the most fundamental and necessary doctrines of the Christian Religion; for they insist but little on them in their sermons: They do not suitably endeavour the conversion of their hearers, do not *travel as in birth, till Christ be formed in them*; but content themselves with moral discourses, and some affected forms of speech, that would better besit the stage than the pulpit; and seem to disdain the good old Scripture-style of our worthy divines.

Some

Some alas ! may be justly charged with Legalism ; as, (1.) They who press people to duties, without discovering the total corruption of their nature, and the necessity of their being regenerated, and believers in Christ, before they can perform any duties acceptable to God. (2.) They who do not rightly distinguish between the law and the gospel, but represent the gospel as if it was only a new edition of the law. (3.) They who do not preach the absolute freedom of grace, through Christ, as the spring of a sinner's justification and salvation. (4.) They who do not warn sinners of the danger of *resting* in their own duties, and righteousness; a danger which all exercised to godliness, deeply sensible of, being made to feel the strong bent and biases of our corrupt natures, to put our own doings in Christ's room, Rom. ix. 32. and x. 3. (5.) They who do not teach the necessity of the Holy Spirit's operations and influences, to work in us *both to will and to do*. Phil. ii. 13. (6.) They who do not preach Christ, and him crucified, as the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the *All and in all* of religion,
 1. Cor.

1 Cor. i. 23, 24. and ii. 2. Some preach and deal with their people, as if they were all in a gracious state already; they seldom or never treat the doctrine of regeneration, to any purpose: and admit into the solemn Ordinance of our Lord's Supper, many who have no just pretensions to a Gospel becoming walk and conversation. And the conversation of some ministers, is not such as becometh the gospel, and their station; some are negligent in visiting the sick, instructing the ignorant; some carnal, minding more the things of the world than of Christ; some light and frothy, and have little of that gravity and seriousness, which becomes men in so sacred an office; some caress persons of quality and distinction though irreligious, and despise the meaner sort of people though pious, and even ridicule any appearance of zeal in them; some are like politicians, pursuing selfish projects more than the work of the ministry, and studying how to please men rather than Christ, Gal. i. 10. and some are observed to make little conscience of secret and family prayer.

VI. Sins wherewith all, even the best, are chargeable, which are little regarded, yet very provocking to a holy God; as vain thoughts,—idle words, foolish talking and jesting,—wrong thoughts, speeches and actions about others, contrary to Mat. 7. 12.—Over-
 liness in divine worship; particularly, not joining in the duty of singing psalms, and, when others are praying with us, we do not join suitably.—Tak-
 ing a sort of pleasure in the sins, falls, and miseries of these who we think are unfriendly to us,—wearying at religious exercises and circumspect walking unthankfulness, and want of reflection, and the neglect of self-examination.—
 Not mourning for the sins of others, and unconcernedness about their troubles, and about the afflicted state and circumstances of the Lord's people abroad; not praying in secret, as we should, for what we profess to pray for before others. An inclination and ambition to be thought better and more valuable than we really are.

VII. We should mourn and be humbled greatly for the public sins of the
 Church

Church, State and Army, particularly these following :

1st National perfidy, perjury, and covenant-breaking, contrary to our solemn National Covenants, which have been broken and burnt in former times, and many of God's precious Saints cruelly murdered for their faithful adherence to the work of God, by them engaged unto. And these Covenants have been miserably neglected, and slighted even by professed *Presbyterians*; and even our General Assembly seems either afraid, or ashamed to mention them for many years past, so that the memory of them is like to be buried by this generation. As to our Armies and Fleets, there has been, and is in them, so much open profaneness and immorality, and avowed contemning of religion, and the duties thereof, that, instead of being a sanctified defence to the Nation, their sins may provoke the Lord to send desolating judgments upon us.

2^{dly}, With regard to our Church, many things are far wrong in it: (1.) Inferior judicatories do not, as they ought, represent to the General Assembly what

is necessary to be done for reformation and the revival of religion; and, when they do, such representations are little regarded. (2.) Party-work, faction and division, prevail in many Presbyteries and other Courts, and how partial and superficial, in the exercise of Church discipline are the most? (3.) Our General Assembly, for many years, have been too much influenced by carnal motives, and have not duly endeavoured to preserve the rights and privileges of the church, nor the royal prerogatives of *Christ* her King and Head. (4.) Our church now makes no faithful representations of grievances to the Civil Government. (5.) Many of the speakers in assemblies are least zealous for reformation, and they who profess better principles are culpably silent, (6.) The Assembly hath for several years past, given over appointing days of National Fasting and Thanksgiving, and seems to have resigned the church's power, in that and other matters, into the hands of the civil government: and in a great measure submitted to practical *Eraastianism*. (7.) The Commissions of the

B Assembly

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B Assembly

Assembly ordinarily consist of too many Ministers and Elders in, or near Edinburgh ; who, being mostly under undue influence, carry matters a wrong way ; particularly, the Commission has of late years, obtruded many Ministers on vacant parishes, sometimes on the foot of Presentations, sometimes in compliance with the humour of some great man or other, altogether against the will of the parishoners. (8.) Our Commission and Assembly are so far from seeking the removal of Patronages, which formerly were complained of, as an antichristian usurpation on the church of Christ, most destructive to religion ; that the same is, not only tamely submitted to, and acquiesced in, but more keenly pleaded for, and promoted in Church judicatories, than by the Civil Law : And all the former wrestlings and testimonies of this and other churches against the same, are on the matter counteracted and condemned. Some Ministers have been very active in promoting this Church's defection, from the purity of our once attained reformation, and thereby have given great offence to
many

many of the Lord's people through the land. It is really surprising to many, that these men do not reflect how unlike they are to their worthy predecessors, the faithful Ministers of *Scotland* in former times, and how very differently shall their names be transmitted to posterity, from these great and worthy men, who, under God, established our reformation; such as *Knox, Welch, the Melvins, Bruce, Calderwood, Rutherford, Dickson, Gillespie, Durham*, with many others: And also, how sad is it, that so few are endeavouring to stop the career of our defection, or at least, to keep up a standing testimony against it. As to the Civil Government, we shall only say, it were to be wished the sins of Magistrates, and civil officers of all ranks, were laid to heart, and lamented, else the Lord's wrath may break forth for them, *Jer. xxxii. 32.*

3dly, Many heresies and errors are vented in this age; and some of this church have essayed to spread, first *Arminianism*, and then *Arianism*, yet have not been duly censured; others are not fond of *Creeeds* and *Confessions*; others

have introduced many foolish and dangerous notions ; it is feared also, that *Arminianism* is mightily prevailing amongst us. How sad is it, that such errors should be found in *Scotland*? How many *Socinians* and *Quakers* are in these lands? And is not *Prelacy* and *Jacobitism* daily gaining ground in *Scotland*, where these are almost inseparable? And how lamentable is the increase of Popery? Popish priests, and meetings for their idolatrous worship, avowedly kept up, yea, tolerate by the civil power; so that Popery has spread more of late years, than ever it did, even in the reigns of King *Charles* and King *James*.

Infidelity and Atheism are prevailing in our time, as may appear by the many blasphemous books and pamphlets published of late, denying the truth of the Christian Religion, without controul, from these who ought to honour God, by a just restraint of such Heaven-daring practices; and these books are greedily bought up, and read by many of all ranks, insomuch that there never were so formidable, keen and daring attacks

attacks made against Christianity, since it was first received into BRITAIN; And considering the looseness of this age, and our misimprovement of Gospel-light, may we not fear, least the inhabitants of BRITAIN and IRELAND, be left to relinquish Christianity altogether, and relapse into downright *Paganism*. We should also mourn over the manifest evidences of the Lord's wrath already gone forth against us. And even with regard to our secular concerns, is it not obvious, that the Lord has sent forth a most dreadful spirit of division, of discontent, of envy, and jealousy, a spirit of ambition, of self-seeking, and emulation amongst us; so that there are scarce any societies of men, where it does not prevail, and that both in our civil and spiritual concerns; infomuch that the Lord's people themselves, cannot in many cases, be brought to one about sin and duty. Is it not great cause of mourning, that the generality of all ranks are wofully sunk in neutrality and indifferency, and seem to be settled on their lees,—and to be saying in their hearts, the Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil. Is it

not matter of great lamentation, that the present generation, instead of being suitably exercised in mourning for the foresaid provocations, are not only approving the deeds of their fathers, and so serving themselves heirs to their guilt, but are risen up in their father's stead, an increase of sinful men, to augment yet the fierce anger of the Lord against us? Is it not great cause of mourning, that the Lord hath given up so many to the *lusts of their own hearts*, Psal. lxxxi. 11, 12. He withdraws from and frowns upon our solemn assemblies for worship, and has in a great measure forsaken his ordinances; and the most part seem to be only blinded and hardened by the means of grace, Isa. vi. 9, 10. And how is a Spirit of supplication much restrained from the souls of God's own remnant; so that there are but few mourners in *Zion*, and little wrestling by prayer with the Lord, notwithstanding his work and interest is so visibly upon the decline? Nay, and Gospel-ministers seem to have too much forgot, the great necessity of divine countenance to their public administrations, which looks too like the Lord's coming against

us in a way of judgment as a moth, Hof. v. 12. Alas! may we not fear, that the generality may be so far left to apostatize, as to reject Christianity altogether; and that our external strokes may be like those, whereby *Jerusalem* and the *Jews* were destroyed for *rejecting the Lord of Glory*? 1 Thess. ii. 16. Luke xix. 41, 42. The most eminent of the Lord's servants and people, who have had intimate communion with God in *Christ*, have declared, they foresaw very dreadful calamities coming on *Britain* and *Ireland*, for their rejecting of Christ and abuse of the Gospel, and breach of our solemn vows to the Most High God; yet, they were also of the mind, that after the storm, the Lord will send a glorious sunshine of Gospel-light, and give much of his gracious presence in ordinances.— And however now-a-days, some mock at the discoveries of the Lord's mind to his people, and brand such with the name of Enthusiasm; yet we desire to pay all due regard to it, and bless the Lord for any the least intimation of his favour to these Lands; let others mock till their *bands be made strong*. On such accounts the Lord's people should be much and often

often in prayer and fasting, begging grace from a God in Christ to be suitably affected, and to be helped to flee to Christ the exalted Prince, who gives repentance and remission of sins: Supplicating most earnestly and importunately, (1.) That the Lord would awaken all ranks, Magistrates, Ministers, and people, and bring both Church and State to repentance, and to set about speedy and thorow reformation. (2.) That he would put a stop to errors, heresies and infidelity, restore and continue with us the blessed privilege of Gospel-doctrine, and Gospel-ordinances in purity and plenty, and grant much of his gracious presence therewith, that he would purge and preserve his Church at home and abroad, sanctify Ministers and other Church-Officers more and more, convince and convert sinners, confirm and comfort believers and dwell yet in the midst of us. (3.) That he would mercifully reclaim such of our Ministers as are carrying on a course of defection, and inspire Church judicatories yet with zeal for reformation. (4.) That he would bring order out of our numberless confusions, heal our divisions, remove the judgments

judgments we are under; and prevent what we are threatened with.

(5.) That he would not deal with us as we have sinned, nor reward us according to our iniquities; that he may not hide his judgments from us, nor give us up to hardness and unbelief of heart, to blindness of mind, to a spirit of stupidity, of distraction and confusion.

(6.) That the Lord would bless our Sovereign King *George*, his Consort the *Queen*, and all the branches of the Royal Family, with graces and gifts necessary for the right discharge of the important and weighty duties incumbent on them in their high station, and with zeal for God and his cause at home and abroad; and disappoint the wicked designs of those who are enemies to his Majesty's Government and our holy religion. (7.)

That he would bless those in inferior lawful authority; pouring out his Spirit upon them as a spirit of faith, repentance and reformation; enabling them to hear his voice, both in his word and in his providences, and leading them to employ their power and authority

thority for God : that he would set wise counsellors about the throne, and direct in the present conjuncture of affairs.— overruling, for his own glory and the good of these lands, the threatening aspect of providence both abroad and at home. (8.) That he would have mercy on the young and rising generation, and raise up a seed from amongst them to serve and honour him, that one generation may praise his works to another ; that he would hasten the overthrow of Mahometan delusion, consume the man of sin by the spirit of his mouth. and destroy him by the brightness of his coming. (9.) That he would make the great Ones, the mighty Princes and Potentates of the world who contemn God, and his holy worship, who are, either irreligious, or engaged in a false religion, who(have used) and do use their power against, and hinder the progress of the Gospel, and the advancement of true religion, to lay down that spirit, that antichristian spirit, to embrace the Gospel, to love the power of godliness, to probagate the true knowledge of
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Jesus Christ, and to encourage the faithful dispensers and professors of it, both by their favour and example : that thus they may worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.—Lastly, That the Lord would accomplish in his own time any way these glorious promises made to the church, in the latter days, by removing all the letts and impediments that lies in the way of bringing in his antient tribes ; that a stop may be put to the woful effusion of human blood amongst the nations ; that that happy period may soon approach when nation shall not rise up against nation, neither learn the art of war any more, so that his peaceful kingdom may be erected, an end put to all the woful divisions in the christian world, and that the Lord Jehovah, the Prince of Peace, may reign in mount *Zion*, and before his ancients, gloiously, the kingdoms of the earth become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, and the name of our new testament Jerusalem may be the Lord is there.

A
LETTER TO A MINISTER

OF THE
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

REVEREND SIR,

I HAVE past through your town different times, where I had access, oftner than once, to know the manner in which you entertain your people on the Lord's Day, and conversing with several of your parishioners, whom in the judgment of charity, I cannot but look upon, as having the *root of the matter in them*; found they were entirely of the same opinion with myself, viz. quite dissatisfied with your Public Ministrations; have therefore, out of love to you, and pity to the souls under your charge, dropt these few lines, hoping they will be received in the same friendly manner they are intended, and heartily praying the Spirit of Grace may bless them to you and others concerned,

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so shall I have my end, and God all the Glory.

Sir, you have now been for sometime by office, and I may add, by profession a Minister of the Gospel, and consequently bound in duty to lead your people in the right way to glory ; but to lay aside the doctrine of a crucified Christ, and substitute in the room thereof the dry and sapless Doctrines of Heathenism, (a religion which is not Christianity,) will never be countenanced by God, to renew the hearts or reform the lives of any, or to bring so much as one soul to glory. The Gospel, the glorious Gospel of Christ, is the mean of divine appointment for the salvation of sinners. Hence it is called the gospel of our salvation, Eph. i. 13. *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.* The light of nature is not sufficient for this purpose, as it giveth no discoveries of Christ, Acts iv. 12. *Neither is there salvation in any other : for there is none other name under Heaven given among men whereby we can be saved.*—Nor even the law itself, this being the ministra-

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tion of death and condemnation, 2 Cor. iii. 7, 9. *But if the administration of death &c. if the ministration of condemnation be glory, &c.* The Gospel only is effectual for this end, being the ministration of the Spirit and righteousness, Gal. iii. 2. *This only would I learn of you, Received ye the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?* 2 Cor. iii. 8, 9. *How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.*—And thereby the power of God unto salvation, Rom. i. 16. *For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, &c.* Now the gospel strictly taken, is good Tidings of great Joy to all people, that unto them was born, in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord, Luke ii. 10, 11. *And the Angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you, &c.* Therein God reveals to sinners of mankind the unsearchable riches of Christ. Eph. iii. 8. And thereby Christ in them the hope of glory, Col. i. 27. It doth also invite and command them to believe

believe on Christ for all his salvation, Isa. lv. 1, 2, 3. 1 John i. 23. And doth encourage them by a free promise of that salvation to all that believe on his name, Rom. x. 9, 11. John iii. 16. Now every true Minister of the Gospel, makes it his business in his calling, to recommend Jesus Christ in all his saving fulness of grace and glory, to the faith and love of men, representing to them in the preaching of the word, their original, holy, and happy state in the first Adam, Eccl. vii. 29. the dreadful gulph of sin and misery into which they are plunged by the breach of the first Covenant, Hosea vi. 7. Rom. v. 12. the way of their recovery thro' Christ the second Adam, 1 Cor. xv. 47. who standing in the room of his chosen people, fully answered all the demands of law and justice, John xix. 30. thereby procuring for them all the blessings of grace, faith and repentance, pardon, peace, holiness, &c. and all the happiness of glory, Philip. i. 29. Acts iii. 26. Eph. i. 7. Rom. v. 1. Eph. i. 13. Rom. vi. 23. It is true you sometimes mention faith and repentance as the terms of salvation, but leave your poor people quite
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in the dark as to the nature of them all. If by salvation you mean a state of consummate happiness in Heaven; no doubt true faith and evangelical repentance go before it, but if by salvation, you mean a sinners entrance into a state of salvation here on earth, begun in complete justification and gradual sanctification, Paul tells us, Acts xvi. 31. this is by faith alone, and all true acceptable repentance follows upon it Zach. xii. 10. And indeed saving faith in Christ is the first right step heavenward. Nothing savingly good goes before it, and all saving good follows after it. As to the nature of this faith in Christ I know some would have it to be no more than a mere philosophical faith, an habit of the understanding, whereby we assent to a testimony upon the authority of another and so according to them, faith in Christ is merely a believing the truth of things in the gospel, upon the authority of Christ. But the apostle Paul sheweth, that the faith whereby a sinner is justified, is faith in Christ's blood Rom. iii. 24, 25. and not only in his authority as a testifier. The design of saving faith is, not only to know the truth

truth of Christ and his salvation revealed and promised in the gospel, but also to receive Christ and his salvation as offered by and with the gospel.—Therefore saving faith must necessarily contain two acts, Believing the truth of the Gospel and Believing or trusting on Christ as offered and promised freely to sinners in the Gospel, for all his salvation to be communicated to the sinner in particular. By the one it receiveth the means wherein Christ is conveyed, by the other it receiveth Christ himself and his salvation in the means, as it is one act to receive the cup wherein the wine is conveyed, and another act to drink the wine in the cup. And both these acts must be performed heartily with an unfeigned love to the truth, and a desire of Christ and his salvation above all things. They who believe to the saving of the soul, receive the love of the truth, relishing the goodness and excellency of it, 2 Thes. ii. 10. Philp. iii. 8, 9. esteeming Christ to be all in all Col. iii. 11. in whom all fulness doth dwell, Col. i. 19. loving every part of his salvation, holiness as well as forgive-

ness of sins, and not like many that care for nothing in Christ but only deliverance from hell and damnation. Whoever by grace is possessed of the above faith, whereby the sinner is united to Christ, and by virtue derived from this true Vine, enabled to abound in all the fruits of righteousness and holiness, shall undoubtedly be saved; but whoever falls short of it, be his profession what it will, hath neither a part nor portion in this matter. As to repentance, Gospel repentance; this I have said is a consequence of faith. It is true Christ placeth the duty of repentance before faith, Mark i. 15. But we are to know that Christ requireth repentance first, as the end to be aimed at, and faith in the next place, as the only means of attaining to it, and although the end be first in intention, yet the means are first in execution, though both are absolutely necessary to eternal salvation.

What is repentance but a hearty turning from sin to God, and his service, and what way is there to turn to God but through Christ who is the way, the truth

truth, and the life ; without whom none
 cometh to the Father John xiv. 6. And
 what way is there of coming to Christ
 but by faith. Therefore if we would
 turn to God in the right way, we
 must first come to Christ by faith, and
 faith must go before repentance, as
 the great instrument afforded us by
 the grace of God, for the effectual per-
 formance of it. Repentance is indeed
 a duty which sinners owe naturally to
 God, but the great question is, How
 shall sinners be able to perform it?
 This question is resolved only by the
 Gospel of Christ. The way to repent
 is to begin with believing. Therefore
 the great doctrine of John, in his bap-
 tism of repentance, was, that they
 should believe on him that should come
 after him *i. e.* on Christ Jesus Acts xix. 4.
 A more particular account of the nature of
 true Evangelical repentance, (for I speak
 not here of a Legal repentance which may
 go before faith, nay, may be where faith
 never takes place, such as that of
 Judas) please take as follows. Gospel
 repentance is a saving grace, whereby
 a sinner, not only convinced of his sin
 and

and misery Luke xvi. 17. Rom. vii. 9 but illuminated in the knowledge of Christ, the transcendant glory of his Person and offices, able and willing to help him out of his state of sin and misery, having his will renewed Ps. cx. 3 or made pliable to the gospel, call believing, taking Christ for all and instead of all, Psal. lxxiii. 25. looking for the supply of all he wants in and from Christ, new related to Heaven, by being united to Christ by faith Eph. iii. 17 justified 1 Cor. vi. 6. 11. reconciled to God, Rom. v. 1. adopted into the family of heaven, Eph. ii. 16, 19. having God for his God, John xx. 17. and having his nature sanctified, Eph. i. 13. 1 Cor. vi. 11. the seeds of all grace planted in him as the immediate principles of every gracious action, does turn from sin unto God out of love to him, and hatred of sin, as contrary to his holy nature and will, Jer. xxxi. 18, 19 Ezek. xxxvi. 31. This is the only repentance acceptable to God, and before a sinner is thus furnished for it, it is impossible he can ever reach it.—Thus Dear Sir, I have given you a succinct

scriptural

scriptural account of the nature and end of the Gospel, viz. the Glory of God in the salvation of sinners by Christ Jesus, the nature of saving faith, evangelical repentance, and by scattered hints, the nature of Christ's salvation, Subjects which I am persuaded would be highly agreeable to many of your people to hear handled more fully from the pulpit, and through the blessing of God, might be a happy means of the conversion of sinners, and upbuilding of saints in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation. I own a Minister of the Gospel ought to declare the whole counsel of God to his people, Acts xx. 21, 27. But the doctrine of Christ Jesus the Lord, holds the first place, and is the foundation of all other doctrines whatsoever. The doctrine of his Divine Person, Col. i. 15. his Divine Office, 1 Tim, ii. 5. his Divine Righteousness, Jer. xxiii. 6. and his Divine Spirit, which all that are Christ's receive, Rom. viii. 9. This doctrine being that by which the Spirit mainly worketh is the principal, hence Ministers are called Ministers of Christ. This is the source whence

whence all the streams must flow, the center in which, all the lines of truth do meet. No wonder then that every faithful Minister, makes it his chief business, in his calling to commend Jesus Christ in all his fulness of grace and glory to the faith and love of men, as was said above, since there can be no true christian, but one united to Christ by Faith, and abiding in him by Faith and love, unto the glorifying of the name of Jesus in the beauties of gospel holiness.

When the Gospel hath been preached, and a number of souls are brought to believe in Christ, with the precious faith of God's elect, the next work in the order of the gospel, is to build a house for Jesus Christ, a habitation for him by the Spirit to dwell in, even a spiritual house which is his people, by shewing them how they ought to walk towards God and towards men. Here is the place for morality, bring in your morality here. This you will find to have been the practice of the Apostle Paul, that great master builder, in all his Epistles, particularly Rom. vii. 4. whose example every faithful Minister will

will reckon it his honour and duty to copy after.

A Minister should likewise declare the righteous judgment of God against sin and sinners and preach the law for Gospel ends. But whatever subject they preach upon, a sweet favour of Christ should run thro' them all; if they preach upon the *Perfections* of God, it should be a God in Christ, if upon *Promises* as *Yea* and *Amen* in Christ, if upon *Precepts* as the Law of Christ, thereby raising heathen Morality to Gospel holiness, if upon *Threatenings* of Wrath as such, which will be infallibly executed upon all out of Christ. But to harp continually upon the same string of Moral Duties, prior to Faith in Christ, to make that the main Theme in preaching, is a high affront to all the three Persons of the glorious Trinity, to the electing love of the Father, to the redeeming grace of the Son, and to the applying work of the Spirit in the business of man's salvation. What is this but to introduce a bastard Covenant of works? And I dare venture to say, no soul can thrive under such a ministry, 4. Gal. i. 8. Pray, what can sinners do either

either acceptable to God, or profitable to themselves before their coming to Christ. This, I mean Faith in Christ, is the first, the great, the comprehensive duty required by God under the Gospel, and called by Christ himself, by way of eminency—*The work of God*, John vi. 29. *The work of works*, because all other good works proceed from it. He that doth this, doth all, and he that doth not this, doth nothing.

Though no quarters in Hell are tolerable, yet our Lord saith, Matth. xi. 22, 24. *That it shall be more tolerable, &c.* Many of our civil moral men, nay even of our gay professors, would think themselves highly affronted to be put in the balances with filthy Sodomites, but if it were possible for a person living under the gospel, to have no other fault but only unbelief, and he needs no more to ruin him, his sin is greater, his judgment will be more dreadful, and his state worse for eternity, than that of the vilest of the nations, who never heard of a Saviour, John xv. 22. Heb. ii. 3. and 10, 29. And yet this is

a sin you never take the smallest notice of in your public ministrations, a sin, without which others would not prevail to condemnation, nay, without which others would not prevail even in men's conversation.

If such be the consequences, as represented above of unbelief, both in this and a future world to the hearers, what must these be to many profest Ministers of the Gospel, who being placed, by office, as upon a Watch-tower, to give warning to their people, to fly from the wrath to come, and guide them to Jesus the only City of Refuge, yet never sound the alarm, suffering their people to sleep on securely in the way to Hell; telling them if they perform the husk of a few Moral Duties, they will thereby secure to themselves a state of eternal happiness, and though they have not the smallest knowledge of, nor acquaintance with the Saviour, all will be well with them forever. Such hearers, if grace prevent not, must undoubtedly perish, but their blood will be required at the preacher's hand, Ezek. xxxiii. 7 8.

And how dreadful must this guilt be,

D

since

since our Saviour himself, Math xvi. 26 reckons one soul more valuable than whole world.

O, Dear Sir, if you have any regard for the glory of God, and the salvation of your own, and that of other precious souls, be prevailed upon to step aside from the hurry of the world, take some time to consider with yourself, the importance of your weighty charge, and the awful account you are one day to give of your deportment therein to God. Make choice of such subjects as tend with the power and spirit of God, to weaken the secure. Fear not to tell them, whatever other qualifications they may seem to be possessed of, if they believe not, they must undoubtedly be damned. And when awakened, direct them to the merciful, the compassionate, the tender-hearted Jesus, who hath said it, and will certainly do it, *Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out* John vi. 37. And then build them up with their fellow saints, in their most holy faith. Thus, shew yourself a workman, that needeth not to be ashamed

named, rightly dividing the word of truth, giving to each their portion in due season. Never forget to distinguish between the precious and the vile, believers and unbelievers, otherwise you will be in danger of giving the children's bread unto dogs; always making a close and skillful application of the doctrines taught, which, it is to be supposed, are agreeable to the form of sound words, contained in the Holy Scriptures; this being the ordinance of God for good, extending through his blessing to reach the consciences, hearts, and affections of the hearers, without which the mere informing of the judgment, will be but as water spilt upon the ground that cannot be gathered up again, preaching before and not to the hearers, being out as a tinkling brass or founding cymbal, going in at the one ear and out at the other.

And now to conclude as I began, the whole of what is advanced above, proceeding from a regard to you, and pity to those under your charge; to hear of these few lines being kindly received,

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and

and having the desired effect, will give very great joy. I am, Rev. Sir, a sincere well-wisher of the work and people of God.

D. D.

READER, is it your office to preach the glorious Gospel of the ever blessed God? Are you a faithful Pastor of the Flock of Christ, which he redeemed by his most precious blood? Do you anatomize and open up to sinners, that deplorable and wretched state in which they are by nature, by telling them, that they were born in sin, born to sin, dead in trespasses and sins, and yet living in sin, that every member of the body, and every faculty and power of the soul is corrupted and depraved, and that consequently they have no power nor ability in themselves to do any thing for their own help and recovery, nor to obtain the favour of God, and a right to eternal glory? Do you exhibit a crucified Saviour from the

the Pulpit, in his excellencies and usefulness, in his person and natures, offices and benefits, how he should be believed in, served or suffered for, to precious and immortal souls? If you do these things, O have pity and compassion on your nominal brethren in the sacred function! Many of them are in the language of the prophet Isaiah vi. 10, 11, 12. *blind and ignorant; dumb dogs that cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs, which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way every one for his gain, from his own quarter. Come ye, SAY THEY, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink, to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.* They have no sense or knowledge of the trust reposed in them, they are ignorant of their work, and therefore, very unfit to teach others. If the *seers see not*, who shall see for us? If the *light that is in them be darkness*, how great is that darkness? They do not faithfully reprove men

for their faults, nor tell them what will be in the end thereof. Where is the watchman, that is lifting up his voice like a trumpet, and announcing to us the tremendous judgments that are threatened in the word of God against sinners, and are now in the awful aspect of providence hanging over this sinful nation, and deserve to be poured out upon our guilty heads. Many are *looking to their own way, seeking their own, not the things that are Christ's*: sacrificing the concerns of the Church, and the public welfare at the shrine of private interest and ambition. Are there not many dozing watchmen in our Israel, who talk to their people of the follies of enthusiasm, till their faith in the Divine predictions, which was intended to have been a guard to their hearts against the surfeiting cares of the world, and to keep them vigilant, has lost its power, and they are lulled into a security, from which nothing can rouse them, short of the voice of that trumpet which will rend the heavens and the earth? Have not some converted the religion of Christ into a system

tem of worldly traffic ; who live in pleasure, and, having fed themselves with the fat, and clothed themselves with the wool, abuse, instead of feeding the flock ? Have not many entered into the priest's office, for a piece of bread, and are now become Epicures, and corpulent divines ; filling their catacombs and cellars, better than their closets ? Thus confirming others in their wicked ways and hardening their hearts, whom they ought to reprimand. How can drunkards think it any harm to be drunk, when those who have the charge of their souls reposed in them, join with them and lead them to it ? Alas ! some have conceived such an esteem and respect for the company of their Patrons and others in opulent circumstances, that after they have performed the task of Divine service on the Lord's day ; they are known to set out, either on foot or horse back, to some of those delightful houses, there to spend the week till Saturday evening or Sabbath morning, not in the profession of a Parson, but in the character of a farmer or a philosopher. Pray Sir, who is appointed to

to look after the flock in the Pastor's absence, to reprove, warn, and reclaim the vicious, to comfort the mourner, to strengthen the weak, and to give an account of the state of the flock, on his return, that he may know how to give every one his portion in due season, and to commend himself to every man's conscience, as in the sight of that God, who is now the spectator of all our actions, and ere long, will be our impartial Judge? Are they all supplicating the Supreme Being, to bring down tyranny and oppression every where, to extirpate Popery, and the superstitions of the church of Rome from the earth, that civil and religious liberty, order, and good government may be given to every nation in the habitable globe? No Sir, some have been heard a few months hence, to address the Deity in these words, " O Thou
 " Author of religion, they have broken
 " down thine altars and killed the Priests
 " of the Lord." Do not, some say, that the war in which the nation is now engaged " It is a war of religion.—The
 " French are a nation of infidels—the
 " enemies

"enemies of all religion; and there-
 fore deserve to be extirpated from the
 earth." Admirable imitators of *Him*
 who came not to destroy men's lives,
 but to save them!—A war of religion,
 O ye pious crusaders! Ye never need
 to sheath your swords. There are wick-
 ed nations enow to gratify your holy
 zeal with everlasting bloodshed.—But
 shew us your commission? Is it a for-
 gery, or is it derived from *Him* "who
 maketh his sun to rise on the evil and
 on the good, and who sendeth rain
 on the just and on the unjust; and
 desireth not the death of a sinner?"
 But it is possible that the accusation
 against our enemies may not be exactly
 just. Much as we execrate wickedness,
 yet let us be impartial. Perhaps it
 should rather be, "they are infidels,
 the partizans of no sect." Nobody
 suspects them to have much piety, yet,
 bad as they are, the freedom of every
 description of worship is protected by
 all the force of the nation; but as it is
 likely the majority of the representatives
 of the people have no religion them-
 selves, they have established none, but
 have

have left religion to take care of itself and work its own way by the native power of truth, just as it was forced to do for the first three hundred years after Christ, without either emoluments or penal statutes in its favour ; but with this difference, that no man shall persecute it, nor any one sect persecute another, but if Christianity be from God that it shall have free liberty to make its conquests. Be our opinion what it may of the utility or mischief of religious establishments among Protestants, yet, is not this preferable to the superstitions and horrors of Popery ? And if God in his providence sees fit, by these methods, to overthrow the abominations of Rome, and thus to clear the way for undefiled religion, shall we be angry with his dispensations, or dispute his wisdom †.

Dear Sir, perhaps your patience is now almost exhausted, with the preceding unpleasant queries, and these few hints relative to the war. Pray Sir, bear with me a little longer, while

† Signs of the Times.

put a few more questions to you concerning your nominal brethren. Are not many of them *Philosophical haranguers*? who deliver sermons to their hearers, that are generally nothing but stiff and unaffecting declamations on some moral subject; they wave the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, as dry and speculative points, and choose commonly for their theme, those topics that are common to all religions. We may hear a course of sermons from persons of this stamp, without ever learning what is the great end of revelation, or how a fallen creature may emerge from the ruins of apostasy. They talk much about the beauty of virtue, and how conducive is morality to the happiness of mankind in social and private life: It is true, they cannot, for shame's sake, altogether omit mentioning the name of Christ; but it is as seldom as possible: and, lest it should be shocking to the polite part of their audience, they commonly veil it under some paraphrase; calling him *the sacred Author of our religion*; *that finished pattern of obedience*; or the like. Perhaps you have
read

read in a famous author, " That
 " some have avoided pronouncing the
 " name of Christ in their discourses,
 " because it is a harsh monosyllable, and
 " clogged with too many consonants."

Are not too many of them *Legal de-*
claimers? who are always inculcating
 the *duties*, but seldom the *privileges* of
 Christianity.—Instead of making pri-
 vilege the foundation of duty, they
 make duty the foundation of privilege.
 They are always exhorting their hearers
 to perform duties, but seldom to believe.
 They often tell us, that if we become
 fathers to the poor, eyes to the blind,
 feet to the lame, and cause the widows
 heart to sing for joy; that if we are cha-
 ritable and benevolent, and do some
 good deeds, and a few praise-worthy
 actions, we will obtain the favour of
 God, and a passport to immortal hon-
 our and glory.*

Alas

* A day or two after the celebration of the Lord's
 Supper at N—h-B—k last summer, P— H. M.
 C. minister of M. Sir H— Sir J.— Capt. — &c.
 went of in a boat to the Isle of May.—Previous to the
 departure, proper victuals, and no small quantity of wine
 and spirits &c. were put aboard.—After they had arrived

Alas ! alas ! Dear Sir, is it not a very melancholy truth, that there are some Ministers in our Church, who may have the glorious Redeemer for the matter of their sermons, even when they are not in the least swayed by a regard to His glory and honour, but are solely animated by sordid *interest* and groveling *pride* ? Ministers of this

E

character,

at the destined shore, and all safely landed on the Island, part of the day was spent in the amusements of the place, and not a little portion of it in eating and drinking their royal repast. While they were regaling themselves, many a joke and oath did pass, several songs were sung, and not a few by the Pastor of M. who excelled all the jolly company, with his harmonious notes and theatrical turns: Indeed the Revrend Parson (ironically called so) was the *tongue* of the Trump. When Phœbus had almost run his course in the westren sky, it was suggested by one of the company that it was now more than time to make ready, and put to sea again. Accordingly, the principal Boatman is called, "Well pilot, (says Sir J. S.) are we all safe." "You are all very safe just now, replied the noble Tar," (*laudit plaudits*.) "Come my brave fellow, (says another,) take five or six hearty glasses!" "Five or six hearty glasses," says the Tar, "What do you mean by that? Do you wish to see me the worse of drink, and to make myself viler than a beast? I never was in a state of intoxication yet, and that my worthy friend Sir H. knows; and do you know Sir, (continued the spirited Tar,) that the lives of the company depends much upon me, if I were to get drunk, I would drown you all in a moment; I see the atmosphere is threatening, and the water is already be-

come

character, preach themselves, even when they preach Christ. Though they seem to make as if they wanted their audience should be in love with their Lord and Master, yet they chiefly intend that their audience should admire themselves. When they are composing their sermons, they are more solicitous how they shall touch the passions, please the fancy, and tickle

come rough, so that it will not be easy work to get safe to land, especially when I consider, that my cargo is by this time very bad and unstable ballast." In about half an hour all were aboard. But the sober tars had not rowed many furlongs from the seat of joy and mirth, when the sky became exceeding dark and cloudy, a strong gale of wind from the south-west beat hard upon them, the ocean tempestuous, the waves and billows roaring and running very high, and threatening to devour the little barge in a moment: Which terrific and awful scene, made a son of mirth to exclaim, "It is now manifest that Neptune has waged war against us, for this days conduct.—Come my brave lads, let us have a song to keep up our hearts."—Ah! a song, (cried the Reverend Songster) I can neither sing nor pray." Every attempt and manœver that the mariners endeavoured to use, in order to bring the tossed barge to the desired haven was in vain. They were driven down the Frith, almost to the mouth of the German Ocean. And lo! some of the passengers were now as wet on the outside, as they had bathed themselves in the inside. In this distressed state, it was unanimously agreed to run the boat, if possible, into D—b—r, and to go ashore there. This they obtained with no small difficulty about midnight, or early in the morning. When they

pick the ears of their hearers than how to persuade, than how to break the heart, and espouse the sinner unto Christ. That they may be esteemed men of *learning*, it is ordinary for them to cloud their meaning with strange words, with which the ears of the common people are not accustomed ; and who very often mistake that which is *wonderfully dark* for *wonderfully deep*. And

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that

they entered the town, they found that every person was in bed ; therefore, rather than trouble any house at so early an hour, they all set out on foot, and arrived with much fatigue at N. B. before breckfast. What a noble achievement ! What a worthy deed ! How glorious an action was this ! Let command forthwith be given, to make monumental Pillars, of the most durable Marble, sixty feet high. Call the most eminent Engraver in the British Isle, that he may engrave it with a pen of iron and point of a dimond. Then command these Columns to be erected on North-Berwick Law, on Arthur's Seat, on the top of the Pillars of Hercules, or on the summit of the highest eminence in the Universe ; that so it may be conspicuous, and had in everlasting remembrance, and not be forgot in the day of the restitution of all things, when the *very worthy deeds* and *renowned actions* of the sons of mirth, and Priests of Bacchus, are to be rewarded with immortal honour and glory.—Nay, command not to tell it in Gath, not to publish it in the streets of Askelon, that it be buried forever in the remotest corner of the land of oblivion.

Bona opera sunt via ad regnum, non causa regnandi.

BERNARD.

that they may be reputed men of *piety*, they find themselves under a necessity of counterfeiting those devout affections to which they are entire strangers. Pride chooses their subjects, invents their ornaments, and animates their delivery. What they are chiefly desirous to know, when divine service is over, is not, what benefit their hearers have reaped, but what are their sentiments about themselves. If they gain their applause, and are extolled to the skies, as no ordinary men; their end is reached, and they bless themselves in their fancied superiority unto others.—But if they shall understand, that their audience consider them as but indifferent, common haranguers they are extremely mortified, being disappointed in their principal aim.—Are our Clergy meek and humble? do they study to gain the hearts and affections of their parishioners, by their courtesy and affability to the poor, the afflicted, and those who are labouring under imbecillity of body? No Sir, for it is reported, that some of them do not know the one half of their flock by head-mark; and
no,

no marvel, because they believe not the Oracles of the living and true God, nor desire to experience the salutary influences of the glorious Gospel on their hearts, and to know the grace of God in truth. The men, the authors, and their writings whom they converse with, and delight in so much, never speak of *humility* as a virtue. The graces of the Gospel of the blessed God, humble the creature, and exalt the Creator. But the admired virtues of the heathens tend only to foster pride, and to make the person possessed of them in conceit with himself. Hence none of the orientals, none of the wise men of Greece, nor any of the sages and philosophers of Athens, that emporium of learning, ever erected a divinity to *humility*. Pray, what was the religion of the ancients, and of those Grecian writers and philosophers, who are so much adored and admired in our day, by men who style themselves preachers of the Gospel? It was all a fiction.—Fiction or fable, you know is a creature of the human imagination, and derives its birth from

that love of the *marvellous*, which is in a manner congenial to the soul of man. There is a powerful propensity in our nature towards the *new* and *surprising*. Hence the Legislator laid hold on this bias of human nature, and of course employed *fable* and *fiction* as the most effectual means to civilize a rude, unpolished world. The philosopher, the theologist, the poet, the musician, each in his turn, made use of this vehicle to convey his maxims and instructions to the savage tribes. They knew that *truth*, simple and unadorned, is not possessed of charms powerful enough to captivate the heart of man in his present corrupted and degenerate state. The orientals distinguished themselves in a peculiar manner, by the boldness, the inconsistency, and the extravagance of their mythology. The genial warmth of those climes, the fertility of the soil, which afforded every necessary, every conveniency, and often every luxury of life, without depressing their spirits by laborious exertions; the face of nature perpetually blooming around them, the skies smiling with uninterrupted

uninterrupted serenity; all contributed to inspire the orientals with a glow of fancy and a vigour of imagination rarely to be met with in less happy regions. Hence every object was swelled beyond its natural dimensions. Nothing was great or little in moderation, but every sentiment was heightened with incredible hyperbole.—The magnificent, the sublime, the vast, the enormous, the marvellous, first sprung up, and were brought so maturely, in those native regions of fable and fairy-land. The wise men of the east delighted in obscure enigmatical sentences. They seem to have disdained every sentiment obvious to vulgar apprehension. The sacerdotal tribes of the ancients were the grand depositories of learning as well as of religion. They monopolized all the arts and sciences. They seem to have formed a conspiracy among themselves, to preclude the laity from all the avenues of intellectual improvement. This plan was adopted with a view to keep the laity in subjection, and to enhance their own importance. To accomplish this end, they contrived
to

to perform all the ministrations of their religion in an *unknown tongue*, and to cover them with a thick veil of fable and allegory. All the ancients without exception, deemed the mysteries of religion too sacred and solemn to be communicated to the herd of mankind, naked and unreserved; a mode by which they imagined those sacred and sublime oracles would have been defiled and degraded. Hence the vulgar and profane were prohibited, by the most rigorous penalties, to enquire after the knowledge of the occult mystical exhibitions, which, in their hands, constituted the essence of their religion.—Thus Sir, I have given you a succinct account, nay, I should have rather said, a cursory view of the religious system of the ancients, and Athenian orators. Now, is it not apparently obvious, that when some of our divines of the modern complexion, mount the rostrum that they have in some measure adopted the fictitious system of those mythologists? Did you never observe by their vocables and compositions, that they have taken few of the materials from the sacred Volume,

me, because as they say, " There is little or nothing to be found in that book, but what is melancholy, nothing to be got there to tickle the ear and please the fancy, like that which comes from the regions of fairy-land." Therefore, they have so small pleasure in making it manifest to their audience, that they have been put to the very laborious and troublesome talk of pervading and ransacking the terraqueous globe, yea, I will venture to assert, that they are sometimes under the sore necessity and pinching extremity, to *sail* between *worlds* and *worlds* in the planetary system for to collect materials for their orations, which only inflames the imagination to *the marvellous, the new, the surprising*, and fills the minds of their weak and illiterate hearers with admiration of the unequalled Mercurius, and obliges them to say, " Our Parson is no common man, he possesses much learning, his diction is far above our comprehension, therefore, we must look up to him with profound reverence, and highest respect we can possibly do."—

Thus

Thus they obtain their principal aim, by promulgating things that are *wonderfully dark*, when they are received and understood as *wonderfully deep*. Such preachers and such sermons can neither inform the judgment, nor affect the heart. They are not satisfactory unto the mind, when separated from Christ, who is the true light, that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world. If the truth is not learned, *as it is in Jesus*, a man or women may be as ignorant as a Heathen, in the knowledge of Salvation, after a long course of attendance on such instructions as are tendered and given by our philosophical haranguers. Do you think, that our sinful nation will ever be reformed by such discourses? No surely. In the days of the Apostles, the world was not reformed by moral haranguers; and have we any reason to conclude, that such orations will be more powerful and successful in this degenerate age? On the contrary, is there not ample and abundant reason to think, that Jehovah, the Lord God, who is jealous of the Mediator's glory, will not bless any such sermons

mons with success? "Let us suppose that
 our modern divines had all the refin-
 ed science of Plato and Socrates, and
 all the skill in Morals, attained unto
 by Zeno, Seneca, or Epictetus; were
 they furnished with all the flowing
 oratory of Cicero, and the thunder
 of Demosthenes; were they the per-
 sons so richly endowed, and could
 they employ these talents in every ser-
 mon they preach, they could have no
 reason to hope that they could convert
 or save one soul, while they leave the
 Gospel entirely out of their dis-
 courses."—Such Ministers can nei-
 ther save themselves, nor them that
 hear them. And as they are *walking*
in the light of their own fire, and in the
shadows that they have kindled; is there not
 ground to fear, that *this shall they have*
at the hand of God; they shall lie down in
shame? Contemptible will be the com-
 pensation, and miserable the reward of
 those preachers, who see no harm nor
 evil in leaving out a *crucified Christ, the*
form and substance of the Bible in their
 sermons, to be complimented by the
 unbelieving part of their audience, as
 men

men of *distinguished parts and superior abilities*: For though they have gained the plaudits and applauses of baptized Infidels, *What is their hope when God taketh away their soul?* Pray Sir, what is the cause and whence comes it about that there is such a degeneracy among all ranks and denominations of men in our day, and the public state of religion in poor Scotland, at so low an ebb? Because a crucified Saviour, and salvation through Him, tendered to the chief of sinners in the Gospel, has not been preached in all our Churches, nor has He been exhibited in the lives and conversation of those who profess themselves to be his disciples. *O Lord, said the devout sister of Mary, if thou hadst been here my brother had not died.* So may we say: "Hadst thou, O Lord, been in the sermons of our modern preachers, there would not have been so many dead souls in our congregations; and so many on the very brink of giving up the ghost." I have read some where, that there are seen in the mines, a kind of spirits or fairies who imitate real workmen, and

seem to be very busy in every part of their work; but after all, there is nothing done. These beings, whether real or imaginary, are but too just emblems of all preachers who leave *Christ Jesus the Lord* out of their elaborate compositions. Let them be ever so busy, they are busy about nothing. Some publish philosophical inquiries and moral disquisitions, and call them sermons! Into what times are we fallen! Are there not many Ministers who are perhaps better versed in classic authors, than in the writings of Divine Inspiration. O Sir, we cannot sufficiently admire the eloquence of the sacred Volume. There is nothing in Homer himself, that can rival the sublimity of the Song of Moses, the tenderness of Jeremiah, the loftiness of David, the majesty of Isaiah, whose style is noble, nervous, sublime, and florid: Grotius calls him the Demosthenes of the Hebrews.—And even the herdman Amos, is justly considered by Augustine, in his book of Christian Doctrine, as a great pattern of lofty expression. Nor is this

F peculiar

peculiar to the writings of the Old Testament : The most simple writers of the New Testament, want not very fine strokes of eloquence. So much did the Apostle Paul excel in this, that he was actually taken for Mercurius the god of Eloquence, when he was in the town of Lystra. And it was said of HIM, who inspired these *holy men of God by the Holy Ghost*, and whose name is called *Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, the Father of Lights, the Light of the World, the Wisdom of the Father, the Word of God, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, the Brightness of the Father's Glory, and the express Image of his person*; and with whom *the Spirit of the Lord is, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord*, "Never man spake like this man."

Dear Sir, would it not rejoice your heart to see all the Ministers of the poor Church of Scotland, joining unanimously, for the abolition of that enormous grievance, the Patronage-act; which

which is inconsistent with the very * fundamental articles of the Union of the two nations? It would be easy for our Judicatories, quite to enervate this act, by prohibiting the accepting of presentations, which I believe, no law presently in being forbids to be done. But alas! our Church seems to be in love with the fetters wherewith she is caught, and have been made with her own hands.—How can a Patron be a competent and duly qualified judge of the person who is to take the charge of precious souls, when there are too many Patrons, that have no concern for their own souls! Pray, has Patronage ever tended to promote religion, peace, and unity in the Church of Scotland? No,

F 2

for

* In the Act passed by the Scotch Parliament, January 16th 1707, ratified by the English Parliament March 7th ensuing, it is enacted: "That the true Protestant Religion, as presently professed within this kingdom, with the worship, discipline, and government of this Church, should continue without alteration in all succeeding generations." Now, it is evident, the settling of kirks by Presentations, contrary to the will of the people, was a very material alteration in the government of the Church.

for experience, sad experience, declares and testifies that it has not, and never will. Have we not too much reason to think and to fear, that God is saying of our Church and Nation, *I will return unto my place, until* (rulers and governors, judges and magistrates, ministers and teachers, masters and servants, parents and children, and the whole body of the people) *acknowledge their iniquity*? How tremendous, how awful the thought! Are our Ministers anxiously concerned to have the young and rising generation well instructed in the fundamental principles of the Protestant Religion? For this most important purpose, do they study to have men, not only morally good, but men of principle and eminent for piety and true godliness in all their parochial schools? Do you desire to see the British nation *loyal* to her King, subject to rulers and magistrates, and to all that are in authority over us? This then can only be effected, by faithful ministers preaching the Gospel, in purity and simplicity. The Gospel, the glorious Gospel is the power of God, and

and the wisdom of God, which effectually teaches men to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the world. It had this effect in the primitive ages of Christianity. The million flocked to the evangelical standard. Wherever it prevailed it produced civilization, morality, sobriety, godliness, *loyalty*, and every other private and social virtue. And its power and efficacy is still the same, when accompanied by the power and demonstration of the Spirit to the hearts and consciences of men. Ministers should also solicit the patronage of the opulent in their parishes, to give something out of their affluence for the instruction of the poor, and towards the erecting, establishment, and support of Sunday Schools. Preceptors and parents likewise must not be wanting in doing their part in this scale of private and national advantage by attending more conscientiously than ever to the morals and religious education of the youth and children committed to their charge. But while I thus speak with respect to men in the sacred function, and others in the capa-

city of parents, tutors and governors, I trust that they will ever preserve on their minds, that all the pains and assiduity they can possibly be at, in discharging the duties incumbent on them, will only prove abortive, unless a Divine benediction accompany their endeavours. *Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but God alone giveth the increase.* Therefore, all those who have the charge of precious souls, ought to be frequent and fervent at a throne of grace, supplicating the God of all grace, that he would direct and assist them, and crown their labours with his blessing, which maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow therewith. It is a melancholy truth, that many of the youth in these days, particularly those of the higher ranks of life, are more conversant with, and better versed in that cursed and damnable doctrine, *the great beauty of virtue; the great dignity of human nature,* and in the annals of profane history, the exploits of ancient warriors, the classic authors, the august rites of Mithras, Ceres, and feasts of Bacchus, the names of the Heathen gods, and the offices of their hero-gods, and

and demi-gods; than with the doctrines of the Gospel, than with our most excellent Confession of Faith, the Holy Scriptures of Divine inspiration and the names of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, into which they were baptized. And there are also great numbers among the lower classes of the people, as ignorant of their Creator, for what end they were made, their state by nature, the need, the indispensable need they stand in of Jesus Christ to save them, how they shall get their sins pardoned, how they shall obtain the forfeited favour of Almighty God, and a right to all the blessings of the covenant of Grace ratified by the blood of God, by being interested in the Son of his eternal love, as the very Hottentots or the most savage tribes in the wilds of Africa.— These, these are matters of fact, which I am sorrow to say, are too well authenticated from the youth that come under my charge, from every quarter of the British Isle. But, if the poor are looked upon as the herd of mankind, or according to a phraseology of a proud ignorant English Statesman, *the swinish*

swinish multitude, void of reason and immortal souls, no marvel, that they are so wretchedly neglected by ministers and schoolmasters in town and country. Now Sir, it is as clear as if it were wrote with a Sun-beam, whence all our errors, vice, and immorality, ungodliness, and *disloyalty* originates. The most of our schools instead, of being seminaries for religious instruction, are conventicles for training up our youth in heathen morality, generating debauchees, and initiating them in many of the vices now so prevalent through the land. In a very few years, the generation now on the political Theatre of Britain, must step aside behind the curtain to appear no more, and then the government will devolve upon their children. But, if they have received no other education than those of the ancient Romans, and in this condition, shall take the reins of Government into their hands, what must be the state of affairs in this nation, that has already made such gigantic steps to Paganism. How terrific! how tremendous the thought! Does not your flesh shudder, your breast beat,

your

your heart throb, and tears flow copiously from your eyes, when you take a prospective view of the dreadful scenes that will then commence in these long highly favoured lands! If men who have the charge of precious and immortal souls, would but seriously consider the account that they are to render on that day, when an Omniscient, Omnipresent, and Omnipotent God is to enquire into the motives and principles from which men had acted in their different spheres in the world, they would undoubtedly endeavour to discharge with fidelity, the duties incumbent on them for the good of society, the glory of God, the peace and prosperity of Zion, and the interest of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world. Every Magistrate and Minister, teacher and parent, that is remiss in discharging his duty, is unfaithful to his God, *disloyal* to his King, an enemy to his Country, and a dreadful foe to his own felicity, both in time and through eternity. When a nation becomes bold in iniquity, when it becomes singularly vicious and degenerate, singular and supernatural

pernatural evils are inflicted by the
 hand of God. And wretched is that
 nation when his arm is lifted up against
 it! Do the instances of degeneracy which
 we have mentioned give no alarm to
 our breast? So fallen, so lost to religion,
 have we no reason to dread the ven-
 geance of Heaven? Is not his justice as
 inflexible *now*, his holiness as pure, his
 hatred of sin as great, and his power to
 crush the guilty, as invincible as in for-
 mer periods? Has he visited the crimes
 of a neighbouring nation with the rod
 of his indignation and unheard of judg-
 ments, and will he permit "*a seed of*
 "*evil doers,*" *a nation of Gospel despisers*
and rejecters of the Lord of Glory, to pass
 with impunity? O let the captivity of
 the Jews, their final subversion; let the
 pestilence and famines, the wars and
 earthquakes, teach us the manner in
 which the Almighty administers the
 cup of his wrath to a people "*whose*
 "*hearts are fully set in them to do evil.*"
 Dreadful is the situation of that king-
 dom when Omnipotence is its enemy.
 For the Almighty can employ every
 element in nature to its destruction

The

The animals are also at his command. But the instruments of his avenging arm are not confined to the natural and animal world. If conquerors appear with the destroying scourge in their hands; if the calamities of war pervade the earth, it is to punish general profligacy and corruption of manners. Doubtless with this view the judgments of God at this moment appear in the distracted and tumultuous state of our empire. Trusting too much in the arm of flesh; loaded with national guilt; scarce ever considering the superintendency of Heaven, we have met, disappointment, where we expected success; loss, where we expected gain; shame, where we expected honour. Anxiety in every breast at home; rage and resentment abroad; poverty and decline of trade; property in a sinking, staggering, and fluctuating condition, all proclaim aloud the judgments of Heaven. O that the nation then, in this season of danger and alarm, would look up for strength and wisdom to him, "by whom alone kings reign, and princes decree justice." "O let us humble

' ble ourselves under the mighty hand
 ' of God. Let us turn unto the Lord
 ' who will have mercy upon us; and
 ' unto our God, who will abund-
 ' antly pardon." O that individuals,
 in their several stations, were careful
 for nothing but "to bring forth in
 ' their lives the peaceable fruits of
 ' righteousness." For if the reformation
 of the individual takes place, the puri-
 ty and perfection of the whole must
 follow. And all this then can only be
 done *by the spirit of judgment and the*
spirit of burning, Isa. iv. 4.

Dear Sir, I know not ^{now} what apology
 to make for detaining you so long, I
 must confess that my intrusion has in-
 deed been very rude and impertinent;
 but, before we part, as perhaps we may
 never again meet in this way, permit
 me to say a few words more by way of
 advice, and then we shall have done.
 O then, endeavour to use every mean,
 and every argument in your power, for
 convincing your nominal brethren of
 their fatal mistakes, and soul-ruining
 errors. Faithfully tell them, that
 they are under awful woes, and that
 eternal

† In the year 1235, the Bishop of Lincoln became very famous, by the purity of his manners, the popularity of his preaching, the vigour of his discipline, and the boldness with which he reprov'd the vices, and oppos'd the arbitrary and unreasonable mandates of the Court of Rome. In a letter to the Pope, he writes thus: " If we except the sins of Lucifer and Antichrist, there neither is nor can be a greater crime, nor any thing more contrary to the doctrine of the Gospel, or more odious and abominable in the sight of Jesus Christ, than to ruin and destroy the souls of men, by depriving them of the spiritual aid and ministry of their Pastors. This crime is committed by those who command the benefices intended for the support of able pastors, to be bestowed on those who are incapable of performing the duties of the pastoral office. It is impossible therefore, that the Holy Apostolic See, which received

announcing the danger that Britain is now in, by giving her power in support of the beast, and a free toleration to Popery in these lands?

Is not the whole nation, from the King on the throne to the peasant in the barn, up in rebellion against Omnipotency, and at war with Heaven? But are you lifting up your voice as a trumpet, and shewing us our transgressions,

its authority from the Lord Jesus Christ, for edification, and not for destruction, can be guilty of such a crime, or any thing approaching to such a crime, so hateful to God, and so hurtful to men. For this would be a most manifest corruption and abuse of its authority, which would forfeit all its glory, and plunge it into the pains of Hell." Upon hearing this letter, his Holiness became frantic with rage, poured forth a torrent of abuse against the good Bishop, and threatened to make him an object of terror and astonishment to the whole world. "How dare (said he) this old, deaf, doating fool, disobey my commands? Is not his master, the King of England, my subject, or rather my slave? Cannot he cast him into prison, and crush him in a moment?" But the Cardinals by degrees brought the Pope to think more calmly, and to take no notice of this letter. "Let us not (said they,) raise a tumult in the Church without necessity, and precipitate that revolt and separation from us, which we know must one day take place." Remarkable words, when we reflect *when* and by *whom* they were spoken! But, it is *now* (in this enlightened age,) currently reported, that Britain has sent a guard of English Horse, to protect the old man (the Pope) in his declining days. Q. Is this for the *security* and *prosperity* of the British nation, and to *cancel* her enormous guilt?

sions, and the British nation her sins? Alas! Have no Capt. Self-ease and Capt. Self-interest, and their troops invaded our Church, and now strongly besieging many of her Rostrums; and put the watchmen to silence? Ah! will you be overcome and silenced also? Shall indeed *the fear of man bring a snare in this respect? God forbid*: A faithful Minister is an Ambassador, a Delegate, and an Interpreter sent from God. Therefore you are primarily to declare, who it is that hath sent you; what is his Name; his Nature; his Perfections, Excellencies, and the like: You are to declare that he is the I AM, I am Jehovah, that he hath Being in and of himself, absolutely independent of any other; that he gives Being to all beings; and that he is the same Being, the God that hath been invariably one and the same to the Church and the World, in all generations. *This, says he, is my Name, and my memorial unto all generations.*

2. You are to preach the *Unity*, the *Trinity*, and the *Divinity* of this Deity. 3. You must preach the doctrine of God's Decrees. . The eternity of them: The

inconditionality of them: The immutability of them: And the sovereignty of them. 4. That the Godhead hath an Unity in it; and at the same time a Trinity; and also the Equality thereof in every Divine Perfection; and that there are immanent Acts in God; but likewise, that there are transient Acts; such as pass from God upon certain objects: These external acts are no other, than the execution of his internal and eternal purposes. 5. You are to preach a Divine Providence. Providence is *the Queen of the World*: every thing therein is preserved, governed, and directed by Providence. 6. You are to declare, That after God had created man, he entered into a Covenant with him, Gen. ii. 16. 7. That all mankind are guilty, before God, of the sin that our first parents committed, Rom. v. 12, 13, 14. 8. That man's nature is universally depraved, Isa. i. 5, 6. Rom. iii. 10, 11. 9. You are to preach the misery, as well as the depravity of human nature. There are these three things, which constitute this misery: Past loss; present evil; and approaching

proaching punishment. 10. You must also preach the Covenant of Grace, made with our Lord Jesus Christ, the second *Adam*, viz. That God having in his eternal purpose, elected a number of the human race, did out of his mere good pleasure, covenant with Christ, to redeem them from that estate of sin and misery, which the first *Adam* left them in; and to bring them into an estate of salvation. 11. You are to promulgate, that he who is the Redeemer of the elect, became man; and that he will eternally continue to be God and Man in one Divine Person. 12. That this Redeemer, considered as Mediator, is invested with the triple office of Prophet, Priest, and King. His prophetic office is adapted to our darkness; his priestly to our guiltiness; and his kingly, to our depravedness: As a Prophet, he is made of God, unto us, Wisdom; as a Priest, Righteousness; as a King, Sanctification; and considered as clothed with all the three, complete Redemption, 1 Cor. i. 30. 13. You are to declare the several steps of Christ's humiliation; such as these that relate unto his incarnation, nativity, life and death. 14. You

are not only to preach that Christ was an humbled Redeemer, but also that he is now an exalted Redeemer: His exaltation consists in his resurrection, ascension, session, and his second coming. 15. You must proclaim these important points, respecting Faith and Repentance, Acts xx. 21. *Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.* Under the general term of faith, may be considered the different kinds of it, the subjects of it, the objects of it, the acts of it, the causes of it, and such like. There is an historical faith, a faith of miracles, and there is a temporary faith, but not saving. There are three precious effects of justifying faith, which a temporary believer cannot win to. (1.) To be denied to all his enjoyments and attainments, and walk humbly under them. (2.) To be under some constant and divine impression of the preciousness of Jesus Christ, according to that word, 1 Peter ii. 7. *To you who believe, Christ is precious.* (3.) By true justifying faith, a Christian winneth to mortification of his invisible

visible and predominant lusts, which is impossible for a temporary believer to win to.

But there is a fourth sort of faith, and it is that which is called saving faith : It is called saving, because there is no possibility of salvation without it in an ordinary way. This faith is that grace, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls ; and which is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts ; and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the word. The principal acts of saving faith are, accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone, for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of Grace. 16. You are also to preach repentance. Repentance as well as faith, is the gracious gift of God. The constituent parts of true repentance are these ; humiliation for sin, and reformation from sin. Remorse for sin, without reformation from sin, will not constitute genuine repentance. It is not a mourning for, but a returning from sin, that shews the sincerity of our sorrow : It is not the confession

fession of sin, but the conversion from
 sin unto the Lord, that makes repentance
 unto life. 17. You are to publish
 and declare, that we are justified thro'
 the imputed righteousness of Christ
 alone: *We are justified freely by his
 grace.* 18. You are to preach the
 doctrine of sanctification; to teach, that
 as Christ is a justifying Head to his
 people, so he is their sanctifying Head,
 for he is made of God unto us sanctifi-
 cation, as well as righteousness, 1 Cor.
 i. 30. The inseparable connection be-
 twixt justification and sanctification, is
 particularly to be insisted upon, as well
 as the peculiar differences that take
 place betwixt them, are to be carefully
 distinguished. 19 The final perse-
 verance of God's people in that grace
 conferred upon them, according to the
 foresaid doctrines, is particularly to be
 promulgated; that is to say, After God
 hath converted his elect from darkness
 to light, from Satan to himself, and from
 nature to grace, that neither God, nor
 themselves, nor Satan, nor the world, nor
 any thing besides, can again uncon-
 vert and turn them to their former state.

There

There are these things that concur, in order to confirm the perpetual perseverance of the saints in grace. (1) It is confirmed, by the immutable Decree of God concerning the election of some unto eternal life and glory: This is the foundation of God, which standeth sure, having this seal upon it, The Lord knows them that are his; he knows whom he hath ordained unto eternal life, that they shall obtain it. (2.) It is confirmed by the covenant of grace, made with Christ, in the name of the elect; which covenant is said to be not only well ordered, but sure, and everlasting, Jer. xxxii. 40. (3.) By the merit and efficacy of Christ, the Redeemer of his elect, John vi. 27,—39. (4.) By that union, which takes place between Christ and his people, Rom. viii. 38, 39. (5.) The perseverance of the saints in grace, is further secured unto them by the prevalent intercession of Christ, Luke xxii. 32. (6.) It is further secured, by the oblation or sealing of the Holy Spirit, Rom. viii. 26. 2 Cor. xxi. 22. (7.) It is further confirmed unto

unto them, by the nature of the spiritual life, which is not obnoxious unto death; but is spoken of in scripture, as being perpetual and eternal, John v. 24. and chap. vi. 40. (8.) All the Perfections of God tend to confirm the perseverance of the saints in grace; such as the power, and wisdom, the truth, and faithfulness of God, Psalm lxxiii. 22, 23, 24. Hos. ii. 19, 20. 20. You must preach these truths that relate to things future; such as Death, the Resurrection, the last Judgment, and a state of rewards and punishments in Heaven and Hell. You are to deliver your commission *soundly*, Tit. ii. 1: *But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine.* (2.) You are to preach it universally to all, to high and low, to rich and poor, to young and old, to *Jews* and *Gentiles*; in a word, to saints and sinners. (3.) You are to deliver it particularly, as what *Nathan* did in his sermon to *David*, *Thou art the man.* Thus, *rightly dividing the word of Truth.* (4.) Seasonably, be instant in season, and out of season: A word spoken in season, how good is it? Like apples of gold

in pictures of silver. (5.) You must declare the whole counsel of God, with boldness: I mean such a boldness as does not carry rudeness with it; but with a boldness becoming the office and chair, Jerm. i. 17. 18. (6.) Preach with perspicuity and plainness. *Let the first qualification of speech be perspicuity* said Quintilian. Perspicuity ought to appear in your order and method, and in the style and diction of your discourse. (7.) You ought to preach with gravity, 1 Pet. iv. 11. *If any man speak, let him speak as becomes the oracles of God.* (8.) You are to preach *pathetically*, with all earnestness. Hence, saith the Apostle, We are Ambassadors for God, as though God, did beseech you by us; we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God. How doth he beseech, intreat, pray, and obtest, sometimes by the mercies of God, and by the bowels of Christ, if there be any consolation in Christ, any comfort in love, any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercy? Thus, *Paul* preaches pathetically. Likewise the same *Pathos* is manifested through the ministry of all the
 Prophets

Prophets whom the Lord sent under the Old Testament dispensation.

Human learning, the knowledge of arts and sciences, is good, and hath its use; but divine learning, or knowledge in divine things, is to be divinely learned. It is not enough that you know the scriptures, but you must know them divinely, by the unction and teachings of the Spirit. Natural parts, and human learning, arts and languages, may give you an understanding of the tenor and literal meaning of the Law of God; but none of these can open your eyes to behold the wonders of the law, much less the wonders and mysteries of the Gospel. You cannot interpret the mind of God till you know it; and you cannot know the mind of God, unless God himself reveals it. 1 Cor. ii. 10.—16. Therefore, be frequent and fervent in prayer: Entreating earnestly, that the Lord would grant his Holy Spirit to teach you to preach, and your people to hear to their profit and unspeakable consolation. If you want the Spirit of God in your Ministrations, you

you want the main thing. What is the learning of a *Gamaliel*, the eloquence of an *Apollos*, or the pungent reasoning of a *Paul*, if the power of the Holy Ghost do not co-operate therewith? *Paul* may preach till midnight, and men may be fast asleep under his sermon, who feel not the Spirit. O Sir, vilify, detest, abhor aggrandisement. Seek not your own glory, but the glory of HIM that sent you. You have Christ for your example. Whatever doctrine you shall think fit to insist upon, make Christ your everlasting foundation. Let Christ be the *Beginning*; the *End*; the *Middle*; the *All* of every sermon you preach. With *Him*, comfort thy drooping heart; with *Him*, correct the wandering transgressor. To him you can apply these emphatical words of Jeremiah, Jer. li. 20. *Thou art my battle-ax, and weapons of war: and with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms &c.* Finally, O enforce all your public ministrations by an ex-

H. amplary

amplary walk *: holding forth the word of life in every deportment ; by a holy, heavenly, and godly conversation, evedencing to all around you, that you have the glory of God, the honour of the Redeemer, his cause and interest in the world, the good and prosperity of Zion, and the salvation of souls deeply at heart. *Live on the Gospel,*

* The sin of murder, of any sort, is a very crying crime, but what is momentary and temporal murder, to that which is spiritual and eternal? How fatal have the principles and practices of some ministers been unto the prejudicing, wounding, and slaying of souls ! Hence, I remember of reading a very moving instance to this purpose, with respect unto a lady and her minister : She having imbibed principles of Atheism, and arguing in defence thereof, the Minister enquired of her, Whence she was become an Atheist? She answered, “ Sir, you have “ made me an Atheist ; for you preached and taught us “ so and so ; and yet, you yourself lived a dissolute, loose, “ and scandalous life ; you were the first occasion of my “ becoming an Atheist.” Alas ! how terrible will it be at the great day, when these that bear the character of Ministers, shall have their flocks following them ; howling and crying after them. Woe ! Woe ! unto you, you have been the instruments of our ruin ; you were sent to be our guides, to teach us the way to life and happiness ; but you have been blind guides unto us ; your doctrine and example, instead of being the means of our salvation, hath been the means of our damnation. Woe ! Woe ! unto you, you unworthy, wretched, blind, and base guides ! The importance and difficulty of the ministerial work, made the great *Chrysostom* to query, *Si quis Clericorum sit saluus, If any of the Clergy were saved.*

pel, and you will preach it better to others,—*live* your sermons,—*live* Christ. And now may the God of all conquering and invincible grace, make you a faithful minister of the New Testament, instrumental in reforming the church, valiant for the truths of the Gospel, wise and successful in winning precious souls to the glorious Redeemer, and may you have many seals of your ministry, for a crown of joy and rejoicing in the day of the Lord.

EXTRACT of a Letter dated September 19th 1767, relative to Doctor Conyers of Helmsley in Yorkshire.

THE Doctor had been remarkable pious from his youth, and devoted himself to the ministry from a desire to do good to souls. His parish of Helmsley was very large, being twelve miles square, and his zeal for usefulness was such, that dividing his parish into several Districts, he visited them by turns, preaching three times a day in one part or other of it. He went on this way
some

some years, a stranger to the views he now has of the salvation of Jesus Christ; his preaching was awful, earnest, and partly directing men to repentance, and pleading the mercies of God: On which general foundation he taught his hearers to fix their hopes; many in this way were greatly impressed and much reformed. At length, I think, about nine years ago, he awakened out of a dream, in which he thought himself in a dismal place, and asked a person what place it was; he was answered, *Hell*. Terrified, and looking about, he saw a great *Serpent*, which was wounded in the tail, but not much hurt by it; the guide that stood by the Doctor, told that the *Serpent* was the *Devil*, who was wounded in the tail by his preaching; but that was to little purpose, he must endeavour to crush his head, which could only be done by preaching Christ and him crucified. The Doctor took little notice of his dream at first; but as he was musing on it in his Study, and opening his Bible, cast his eyes on Eph. iii. 7. His thoughts first turned upon the Apostle's expression of humili-
 ty.

ty. "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints." He reasoned thus: The Apostle was, to be sure, much his superior in Learning, and much more in his Apostolick character, yet he thought he could not in justice adopt these words to himself, his mind was therefore rather disquieted. He then said to himself, well, but what is that Grace that was given to the Apostle? Since he thought the Apostle's character as a Scholar might qualify him upon his conversion for a preacher without making such a wonder of it. But then says he, there must be something more in it, "*What are these unsearchable riches of Christ he was to preach?*" He did not understand the expression; but while he was musing upon it, he thought he would examine his notes, and see if he could find any thing of *his grace*, and *the unsearchable riches of his grace* in them. He searched in vain, and sudden grief and shame possessed his heart, he threw his notes into the fire. His thoughts were now changed, and falling down on his knees with a melted heart, he earnestly begged of God that he may shew

shew him, what that *Grace, and unsearchable riches of grace* were. It pleased God now to enlighten his mind, he read the Gospel with other eyes, and every thing he read in it seemed to him anew, as though it had been a revelation just come from heaven. Seeing now the Glories of Christ crucified, and feeling *his grace* upon his heart : He now understood his dream, and the design of the Christian Ministry. Grieved and ashamed to think of his former preaching, he went round to his people in his usual turns, freely told them his grief and shame for his former errors and the danger of them, and opened to them the great subject of his future ministry, *The unsearchable Riches of Christ*. Souls before awakened by his convincing preaching, drank in the word of Salvation, as the thirsty ground does the rain from heaven to his unspeakable joy. He goes on preaching three times every day, and with great success.

FINIS.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE *Queries* to the Reader, only occurred to the Author, after the Letter was put to the Press. If they shall be instrumental, in the hand of the Spirit, of convincing one soul of its sin and danger, the Author will think his trouble amply rewarded.

Doubtless, the eye of the Critic, and the finger of the Connoisseur, will see, and point out many errors in the Composition, and also in the Printing, but, if they shall be so happy as to discover their own faults, in the perusal of this poor Publication, and resolved through Grace to turn from them, it shall then be considered as having answered its principal and only end.

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The object of the present publication is to afford a medium for the publication of advertisements, notices, and other information of a general nature, and to be published weekly, on every Friday, at the office of the printer, in the city of New York.

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